



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/976,931	10/11/2001	Clifford L. Hersh	PA1951US	2047
80641	7590	01/09/2009		
Gard and Kaslow, LLP One 1st Street, Suite 9 Los Altos, CA 94022			EXAMINER TO, JENNIFER N	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2195	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			01/09/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/976,931	Applicant(s) HERSH, CLIFFORD L.	
	Examiner JENNIFER N. TO	Art Unit 2195	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 October 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 10, 15 and 17-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 10, 15 and 17-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 4, 10, 15, and 17-29 are pending in this application.

Double Patenting

2. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to

Art Unit: 2195

be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

3. Claims 4, 10, 15, 17-19, 22, 25, 27 and 29 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 2-3, 18, and 28-31 of U.S. Patent No. 7185340. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other. It is noted that the difference are minor encompass replacement of the recitation of the limitations in the claims and it appears to be substantially the same or in some instance obvious over one another. For example, claims 4, 10, 15, 17-19, 22, 25, 27, and 29 functions performed by the steps are the same as the steps of claims 2-3, 18, and 28-31 of U.S. Patent No. 7185340.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

5. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

6. Claim 15 is directed to a system, but appearing to be comprised of software alone without claiming associated computer hardware required for execution (i.e. memory for storing the tree data structure). For example, claim 15 recited a plurality of means for (i.e. means for tracking, means for rebalancing), but according to the specification (paragraph [0053]), the recited means for are computer code (i.e. software module). The system comprises only software modules is software system. Thus claim 15 is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 101, set forth in this Office action.

8. Claims 4, 10, 15, 17-19, 22, 25, 27, and 29 would be allowable if timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d).

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments filed 10/31/2008 with respect to claims 4, 10, 15, and 17-29 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Art Unit: 2195

10. In the remark applicant argued that: (1) the terminal disclaimer submitted with the response overcome the non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting; (2) claim 15 is directed to statutory subject matter.

11. Examiner respectfully disagreed with applicant.

As to point (1), the terminal disclaimer filed on 10/31/2008 to overcome non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection had not been approved because the attorney who signed the terminal disclaimers was not on record. Therefore, the non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is maintained.

As to point (2), applicant argued that claim 15 is directed to statutory subject matter by point to paragraph [0014] of the specification as well as fig. 2 to support applicant argument. First, according to paragraph [0014], the computer system as disclose therein is not recited in the claim. If applicant means the system as recited in claim 15 is the same as the computer system as disclosed in paragraph [0014], and fig. 2, then the language of claim 15 should be "a computer system comprising". Examiner is agreed with applicant that one of an ordinary skill in the art would know that a computing system including computer code and memory to perform operation. However, the system is not necessary to be a computer system (i.e. it could be a software system) unless applicant recited it as "computer system" or a system that included a combination of software and hardware components. Therefore, applicant had not established that claim 15 is directed to a statutory subject matter. Thus, the

Art Unit: 2195

rejection of claim 15 as being directed to a non-statutory subject matter as explained in the office action paragraph 6 above is maintained.

Conclusion

12. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JENNIFER N. TO whose telephone number is (571)272-7212. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T 6AM- 3:30 PM, F 6AM- 2:30 PM.

Art Unit: 2195

14. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai An can be reached on (571) 272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

15. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/VAN H NGUYEN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2194

Jennifer N. To
Patent Examiner
AU 2195